
A PARTIAL EVALUATION OF THE PRE-SERVICE PROGRAM OF LANGSTON UNIVERSITY THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF REPORTS OF APPRENTICE AND COOPERATING TEACHERS

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The study represents a phase of a comprehensive investigation of teacher education begun at Langston University in 1945. Specifically, it seeks: (1) to present a statement of the working purposes that underlie the teacher education program at Langston University; (2) to ascertain, as far as practicable, the extent to which some of these purposes are being realized as reflected through an analysis of reports submitted by apprentice and cooperating teachers; and (3) to make recommendations for the improvement of the program.

The reports submitted by and concerning sixty-seven students who registered for apprentice teaching between 1946 and 1950 formed the major source of data.

Evaluation is here interpreted as a process of gathering evidence regarding the extent to which objectives are being realized. A statement of objectives developed by the Division of Education emphasizes first the fact that prior consideration should be given to aiding the student in acquiring a broad foundation of general education through a study of non-specialized courses in the major fields of learning. Secondly, it stresses that the pre-service teacher should develop competencies for successful participation in socio-civic activities—religion, community leadership, leisure-time activities, and so on—through acquiring a variety of direct experiences. Third, the statement of purposes focuses attention upon the fact that the student should gain an insight into the nature of children through experiences with real children, as opposed to a study of child growth and development presented wholly in an abstract manner. Fourth, it is believed that pre-service teachers can and will become increasingly more self-directive through experiences in planning and self-appraisal. Fifth, the statement of purposes calls for leading the student to interpret the cultural heritage and to develop a critical attitude concerning psychological and philosophical views relating to the education, the individual and the social group. These objectives, regarded as tentative, served as a basis for organizing experiences for pre-service teachers and for evaluating experiences.

An analysis of the various kinds of reports submitted by students revealed that these pre-service teachers recognized the importance of a good background in both general and professional education. Some registered concern, however, over the guidance given by their advisors and called for affecting a cooperative relationship between the faculty members in the subject matter areas and those in the Division of Education.

In general, the pre-service teachers showed reasonable competency in evaluating their pre-service experiences and their effectiveness as apprentice teachers. Evidence warrants the inference that most of the students possessed critical openmindedness; that they recognized the salient characteristics of a good school program; and that they were somewhat competent in pursuing the implications of an educational philosophy for practice.

Although many of the students were ineffective in describing the behavior of students observed, they showed familiarity with principles of human growth and development.

The cooperating teachers tended to evaluate the apprentice teachers on the basis of performance and personal qualities. Some of the outstanding strengths appearing in the greatest frequency were: ability to motivate students, suitable teaching personality, sense of humor, tolerance of differences, ability to stimulate critical thinking and interest, skill in evaluation and ability to illustrate lessons taught. Weaknesses reported the greatest number of times were: lack of clarity of expression, lack of self-confidence, poor articulation, lack of knowledge of teaching methods, inability to cover assignments, inability to maintain interest and lack of knowledge of evaluation techniques.

TABLE I

Judgments of Twenty-seven Apprentice Teachers by Cooperating Teachers, by Number, Composite and Mean Value, Concerning Attributes Related to Teaching.

TRAIT	NUMBER OF JUDGMENTS	COMPOSITE VALUES	MEAN VALUES
Attractiveness	25	63	2.5
Enthusiasm	25	58	2.3
Health	23	48	2.0
Accuracy	26	46	1.7
Refinement	26	62	2.3
Promptness	27	59	2.0
Fluency	24	46	1.9
Interest	24	57	2.3
Openmindedness	26	61	2.3
Resourcefulness	24	50	2.0
Growth	24	50	2.0

Using the weighted-value method, the writer sought to determine the evaluations made of twenty-seven students by their cooperating teachers on eleven characteristics associated with a good teacher. Table I presents the judgments by number, composite and mean values assigned by the cooperating teachers. The Table shows that the mean value assigned ranged from 2.5 on attractiveness to 1.7 on accuracy. Students earned a mean value of 1.9 on fluency.

In the light of an analysis of the reports written by and regarding sixty-seven students who prepared to become teachers between 1946-50 at Langston University, the following recommendations appear to be warranted:

1. That Langston University view its teacher education as a cooperative endeavor by effecting greater cooperation between subject matter departments and the Division of Education.

2. That an all-university committee on teacher education be created to coordinate the program of teacher preparation.

3. That further examination be made of the programs of general and professional education to the end that students may develop more effectively in achieving the competencies recognized as essential for teaching.

4. That the program of guidance and counselling be reexamined with a view to aiding students with personal problems as well as with those of a professional nature.

5. That the program be expanded to provide increased opportunities for prospective teachers to study children at first hand.
